

中文导读英文版

Van Loon's Geography

房龙地理

[美] 房龙 原著
刘乃亚 纪飞 编译

清华大学出版社

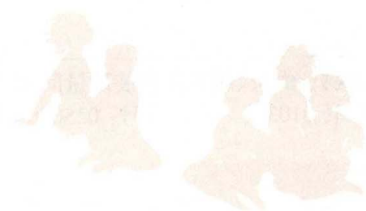


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亨德里克·威廉·房龙（Hendrik Willem van Loon，1882—1944），荷兰裔美国人，20 世纪美国最伟大的历史学家、科普作家和文学家。20 世纪 20 年代开始，他的著作陆续被介绍给中国读者，翻译者把这个荷兰名字汉译为“房龙”。此后，这个名字为我国读者所熟悉，流传下来。

房龙于 1882 年 1 月出生于荷兰鹿特丹。幼年时对历史、地理、船舶、绘画和音乐感兴趣，这种兴趣终其一生也未放弃。10 岁时立志要当一名历史学家。父亲对他专横粗暴，而母亲却百般溺爱。从 8 岁起，房龙先后进入一些著名的寄宿制学校，学习了拉丁文、希腊文和英文，他的才智迅速提高。1902 年 20 岁的房龙来到美国，进入康奈尔大学，并在康奈尔大学完成本科课程。1911 年获德国慕尼黑大学博士学位。房龙求学前后，当过编辑、记者、播音员，也先后在美国几所大学任教，游历过世界很多地方。房龙多才多艺，能用 10 种文字写作和与人交流，拉得一手小提琴，还能画画，他的著作中的所有插图全部出自他自己手笔。

1913 年，房龙编著并出版了第一本历史书《荷兰共和国的衰亡》，虽然销量一般，但受到书评界的赞扬。1920 年圣诞节期间，房龙出版了他的第二本书《古代的人》，这是一部带插图的通俗历史读本，市场反应良好。经过知识、阅历、研究成果等方面的积累，房龙于 1921 年出版了他的第三部历史著作《人类的故事》，并一举成名，从此房龙迎来了他创作丰收期。之后，房龙陆续出版了《发明的故事》、《圣经的故事》、《美国的故事》、《房龙地理》（《人类的家园》）、《人类的艺术》、《宽容》、《与世界伟人谈心》、《伦勃朗传》、《荷兰共和国兴衰史》、《太平洋的故事》等二十多部著作。房龙的作品在当时可谓饮誉世界，荷兰、德国、法国、瑞典、丹麦、芬兰、挪威、日本、印度、苏联、西班牙、意大利、波兰、匈牙利、希腊

前言



等国都翻译出版了他的作品。

自 20 世纪 20 年代开始，房龙的主要作品几乎被同步介绍给中国的读者。房龙深入浅出的通俗文风和百科全书般的渊博知识，对与之同时代的中国读者产生了巨大的影响。这是因为，一方面房龙的文风正好适合于当时新文化运动所提倡的生活化的白话文，房龙的书也为中国求知者提供了关于人类和自然的启蒙知识；另一方面，房龙的写作技巧也给中国当时的作家以很多启发。历史学家和著名报人曹聚仁回忆说，20 世纪 20 年代，他在候车时偶然买到《人类的故事》中译本，“那天下午，我发痴似的，车来了，在车上读，到了家中，把晚饭吞下去，就靠在床上读，一直读到天明，走马观花地总算看完了。这 50 年中，我总是看了又看，除了《儒林外史》、《红楼梦》，没有其他的书这么吸引我了”。郁达夫曾说：“房龙的笔，有一种魔力……是将文学家的手法，拿来用以讲述科学……无论大人小孩，读他书的人，都觉得娓娓忘倦了。”20 世纪 80 年代是中国改革开放的年代，房龙的作品重新被发掘，并被逐步引进。而自 20 世纪 90 年代后期开始，国内兴起“房龙热”，房龙的作品再次受到读者的青睐，这是因为他的著作特别符合现代中国人的心理气象：务实进取的时代，读书趋向于知识性、趣味性。

目前，国内已出版的房龙著作的形式主要有两种，一种是中文翻译版，另一种是中英文对照版。而其中的中英文对照读本比较受读者的欢迎，这主要是得益于中国人热衷于学习英语的大环境。而从英文学习的角度来看，直接使用纯英文的学习资料更有利于英语学习。考虑到对英文内容背景的了解有助于英文阅读，使用中文导读应该是一种比较好的方式，也可以说是该类型书的第三种版本形式。采用中文导读而非中英文对照的方式进行编排，有利于国内读者摆脱对英文阅读依赖中文注释的习惯。基于以上原因，我们决定编译房龙系列著作中的经典，其中包括《人类的故事》、《圣经的故事》、《房龙地理》、《宽容》和《太平洋的故事》，并采用中文导读英文版的形式出版。在中文导读中，我们尽力使其贴近原作的精髓，也尽可能地保留原作简洁、精练、明快的风格。我们希望能够编出为当代中国读者所喜爱的经典读本。读者在阅读英文故事之前，可以先阅读中文导读内容，这样有利于了解故事背景，从而加快阅读速度。我们相信，这些经典著作的引进对加强当代中国读者，特别是青少年读者的科学素养和



前言

人文修养是非常有帮助的。

房龙始终站在全人类的高度在写作，他摈弃了深奥理论，却拥有自己独立的思想和体系，他的论述主要是围绕人类生存与发展等本质的问题，贯穿其中的精神是科学、宽容和进步，他的目标是向人类的无知与偏执挑战，他采取的方式是普及知识和真理，使它们成为人所皆知的常识。房龙毕生持人文主义立场，在有的问题上不免有与马克思主义不同的观点；同时，由于他是生活在 20 世纪早期的美国作家，其思想的观点不可避免地会受到时代和历史的局限，比如在他的《房龙地理》一书中错误地将西藏放到“中亚高地”这一章，而不是“中国”这一章来讲述，又比如他以地理环境决定论来解释日本近代侵略行为，希望读者朋友阅读这些著作时能够甄别。

本书主要内容由刘乃亚、纪飞编译。参加本书故事素材搜集整理及编译工作的还有郑佳、王勋、赵雪、左新杲、黄福成、冯洁、徐鑫、马启龙、王业伟、王旭敏、陈楠、王多多、邵舒丽、周丽萍、王晓旭、李永振、孟宪行、熊红华、胡国平、熊建国、徐平国、王小红等。限于我们的科学、人文素养和英语水平，书中一定会有一些不当之处，我们衷心希望读者朋友批评指正。

前面的话

地理是什么？之前我们所学的地理只是名词，缺乏联系。本书中我要着重描述那些真正有趣的国家，他们为什么会在那里，从哪里来，现在正在做什么，而不会对那些只意味着一些名字的国家给予过多关注，这样才能使我们更好地记住它们。

Foreword

Ten years ago you sent me a letter and today you get your answer. What you wrote (I am quoting from the original) was this:

“...Yes, but how about geography? No, I don't merely want a new geography. I want a geography of my own, a geography that shall tell me what I want to know and omit everything else and I want you to write it for me. I went to a school where they took the subject very seriously. I learned all about the different countries and how they were bounded and about the cities and how many inhabitants they had and I learned the names of all the mountains and how high they were and how much coal was exported every year, and I forgot all these things just as fast as I had learned them. They failed to connect. They resolved themselves into a jumble of badly digested recollections, like a museum too full of pictures or a concert that has lasted too long. And they were of no earthly value to me, for every time I needed some concrete fact, I had to look it up on maps and in atlases and encyclopedias and blue books. I suppose that many others have suffered in the same way. On behalf of all these poor victims, will you please give us a new geography that will be of some use? Put all the mountains and the cities and the oceans on your maps and then tell us

前面的话



only about the people who live in those, places and why they are there and where they came from and what they are doing—a sort of human interest story applied to geography. And please stress the countries that are really interesting and don't pay quite so much attention to the others that are merely names, for then we will be able to remember all about them, but otherwise..."

And I, eager as always to oblige when I receive a command from your hands, turn around and say, "My dear, here it is!"

HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON

阅读本书之前，告诉你如何使用这本书

Just A Moment Before We Go Any Further While I Tell You How To Use This Book

本书是为一般读者对自己生活环境有一些了解所著。最好且最方便的学习地理方法是用图片。我已经根据自己的地理构想绘出了一些样品，包括一些平面地图和三维地图。建议读者根据自己对于事情将被如何处理的主意画出你自己的地图。

JUST A MOMENT BEFORE WE GO ANY FURTHER WHILE I TELL YOU HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book should be read with an atlas. There are a large number of excellent atlases and almost any one will do. For atlases are like dictionaries. Even a bad one is better than none at all.

As you will soon discover, there are quite a number of maps in this volume but these are not meant as a substitute for a regular atlas. I drew them merely to show you the many ways of approach to the subject under discussion and (if I must tell the truth) to get you personally interested in drawing maps according to your own notion of the geographical right and wrong. You see, flat maps, however ingeniously conceived, must be somewhat out of gear. The only approximately correct maps are those pasted on globes but even our globes are not entirely above suspicion for they should really be spheroids. We make them spheres merely for the sake of convenience. The earth, of course, is slightly flattened near the poles but it would take a gigantic globe to show the

阅读本书之前，告诉你如何使用这本书

difference, and so we need not worry about that minor irregularity. Get yourself a globe (I wrote this book with the help of a ten-cent-store globe which was really a pencil-sharpener) and use it to your heart's content, but remember that it is an "approximation" and not an "established fact". The "established facts" will only enter into your life if you should try to qualify for a master mariner's certificate. But in that case, you would have to spend many years mastering an exceedingly difficult branch of science; and this book was not written for specialists but for the average reader who wants to get some general ideas about the planet upon which he happens to live.

Now let me tell you one thing. The best and most convenient way to learn geography is to reevaluate everything into pictures.

Don't copy me or anybody else. Look at my pictures if you care to do so, but regard them merely as a sort of geographical appetizer, as polite suggestions for the meal you intend to prepare yourself by and by.

I have tried to give you quite a number of samples according to the geographical notions of the author himself. I have drawn you two-dimensional maps and three-dimensional maps. It will take you some time to get accustomed to these three-dimensional contraptions but, once you see them, you will no longer like the two-dimensional variety. I have given you maps as seen from mountain tops and according to the different angles from which you are able to contemplate a landscape. And I have given you maps as seen from aeroplanes and Zeppelins and the sort of maps we might expect to see if the oceans should run dry. I have given you a few maps which are merely pretty and ornamental and others which resemble geometrical patterns. Take your choice and then draw your own maps according to your own notions of how the thing should be done.

Draw maps...Get yourself a small globe or a large globe and an atlas. Buy yourself a pencil and a pad of paper and then draw your own pictures.

For there is only one way in which you can learn geography so that you will never forget it ——draw pictures.



1. 我们生活的世界还生活着其他人/
And These Are the People Who Live in the World We Live in 1
2. “地理”一词的定义以及我将在本书中如何使用它/
A Definition of the Word Geography and How I Shall
Apply It in the Present Volume 9
3. 我们的行星：它的习性、风俗以及举止/
Our Planet: Its Habits, Customs and Manners 12
4. 地图。非常简洁的一章但却描述一个庞大而吸引人的话题。
同时还介绍人们通过缓慢地学习如何在这个行星上找到
路线的几点观察/ Maps. A very Brief Chapter upon a very
Big and Fascinating Subject. Together with a Few
Observations on the Way People Slowly Learned
How to Find Their Way on This Planet of Ours 35
5. 季节以及它们是怎样变化的/
The Seasons and How They happen 52
6. 想想这个星球上的小块旱地，为什么其中一些被称为洲，
而另外一些却不是/ Concerning the Little Spots of Dry
Land on This Planet and Why Some of Them are Called
Continents While Others are not 56
7. 关于欧洲的发现以及生活在那里的人们/ Of the Discovery
of Europe and the Sort of People Who Live in That Part
of the World 64
8. 希腊，东地中海的岩石岬角，连接古老亚洲和新兴欧洲
的桥梁/ Greece, the Rocky Promontory of the Eastern
Mediterranean Which Acted as the Connecting Link
Between the Old Asia and the New Europe 68



9. 意大利，它的地理情况使它一旦时机成熟就能充当海上霸主或陆上霸主的角色/ Italy, the Country Which due to Its Geographical Situation Could Play the Role of a Sea-Power or a Land-Power, as the Occasion Demanded	80
10. 西班牙，非洲和欧洲碰撞处/Spain, Where Africa and Europe Clashed...	99
11. 法国，拥有想要的一切的国家/ France, the Country That Has Everything It Wants	113
12. 比利时，纸片缔造的国家，除内部和谐，拥有一切/ Belgium, A Country Created by Scraps of Paper and Rich in Everything except Internal Harmony	128
13. 卢森堡，历史奇迹/Luxemburg, the Historical Curiosity	133
14. 瑞士，高山上的国家，拥有优秀的学校和团结的国民——讲四种不同的语言/ Switzerland, the Country of High Mountains, Excellent Schools and a Unified People Who Speak Four Different Languages	135
15. 德国，建立得太晚的国家/ Germany, the Nation That was Founded too Late	143
16. 奥地利，一个不受人重视的国家，除非它不再存在/ Austria, the Country That Nobody Appreciated Until It no Longer Existed	154
17. 丹麦，某些方面小国胜过大国的典范/ Denmark, An Object Lesson in Certain Advantages of Small Countries over Large Ones	159
18. 冰岛，北冰洋中有趣的政治实验室/ Iceland, An Interesting Political Laboratory in the Arctic Ocean	164
19. 斯堪的纳维亚半岛，瑞典王国与挪威王国的领地/ The Scandinavian Peninsula, The Territory Occupied by the Kingdoms of Sweden and Norway	168
20. 荷兰，北海岸堤上的沼泽，它却变成了一个帝国/ The Netherlands, the Swamp On the Banks of the North Sea That Became An Empire	179



21. 大不列颠, 荷兰海岸线外的一个岛屿, 为全人类 1/4 的人口谋幸福/ Great Britain, An Island off the Dutch Coast Which Is Responsible For the Happiness of Fully One-Quarter of the Human Race 185
22. 俄罗斯, 其地理位置让人难以断定它是欧洲的一部分还是亚洲的一部分/ Russia, the Country Which Was Prevented By Its Geographical Location From Ever Finding Out Whether It Was Part of Europe Or of Asia..... 207
23. 波兰, 遭受作为走廊之痛的国家, 而现在却拥有自己的走廊/ Poland, the Country That Had always suffered from Being a Corridor and Therefore now Has a Corridor of Its Own 226
24. 捷克斯洛伐克, 《凡尔赛和约》的产物/ Czechoslovakia, a Product of the Treaty of Versailles 230
25. 南斯拉夫, 《凡尔赛和约》的另一个产物/ Yugoslavia, Another Product of the Treaty of Versailles 234
26. 保加利亚, 巴尔干国家中最健全者, 因爱好收集蝴蝶的国王在世界大战中押错了宝而自食其果/ Bulgaria, the Soundest of All Balkan Countries, Whose Butterfly-Collecting King Bet on the Wrong Horse during the Great War and Suffered the Consequences 238
27. 罗马尼亚, 拥有石油和皇室的国家/ Romania, a Country Which Has Oil and a Royal Family 243
28. 匈牙利, 或它的那些遗物/Hungary, or What Remains of It 246
29. 芬兰, 另一个通过智慧和勤奋战胜恶劣自然环境的例子/ Finland, Another Example of What Hard Work and Intelligence can Achieve amid Hostile Natural Surroundings 250
30. 亚洲的发现/The Discovery of Asia 253
31. 对于世界其他地方而言, 亚洲意味着什么/ What Asia has Meant to the Rest of the World..... 258
32. 中亚高地/The Central Asiatic Highlands..... 261
33. 亚洲西部大高原/The Great Western Plateau of Asia..... 270
34. 阿拉伯, 何时是亚洲的一部分, 何时又不是/ Arabia—or When is a Part of Asia not a Part of Asia 285

目录



CONTENTS

35. 印度, 自然和人类同时在从事大规模生产的地方/
India, Where Nature and Man are Engaged in Mass-Production 290
36. 占据另一个南亚大半岛的缅甸、泰国、安南以及马六甲/
Burma, Siam, Anam and Malacca, Which Occupy the Other
Great Southern Peninsula of Asia 302
37. 中国, 东亚大半岛/
The Republic of China, the Great Peninsula of Eastern Asia 308
38. 朝鲜、蒙古/Korea, Mongolia 325
39. 日本帝国/The Japanese Empire 329
40. 菲律宾, 墨西哥的古老辖地/
The Philippines, an old Administrative Part of Mexico 342
41. 荷属东印度, 尾大不掉/
The Dutch East Indies, the Tail That Wags the Dog 346
42. 澳大利亚, 大自然的养子/Australia, the Step-Child of Nature 353
43. 新西兰/New Zealand 363
44. 太平洋上的岛屿, 在那里, 人们既不辛勤工作, 也不会胡扯,
却同我们一样地生活着/ The Islands of the Pacific Where People
Neither Toiled Nor Spun but Lived Just the Same 367
45. 非洲, 矛盾与对立的大陆/
Africa, the Continent of Contradictions and Contrasts 370
46. 美洲, 幸运之洲/America, the Most Fortunate of All 408
47. 新世界/A New World 437

1. 我们生活的世界还生活着其他人

And These Are the People Who
Live in the World We Live in



假设每个人都高 6 英尺(译者注:1 英尺=0.3048 米),宽 1.5 英尺,厚 1 英尺,就可以将全人类装在边长为半英里那么大的盒子里。把盒子推入亚利桑那州的大峡谷,人类将被埋葬在那里。远方的天文学家不会注意到这些,一个世纪后,只有那里周围的山和植物见证着人类被埋葬的所在地。

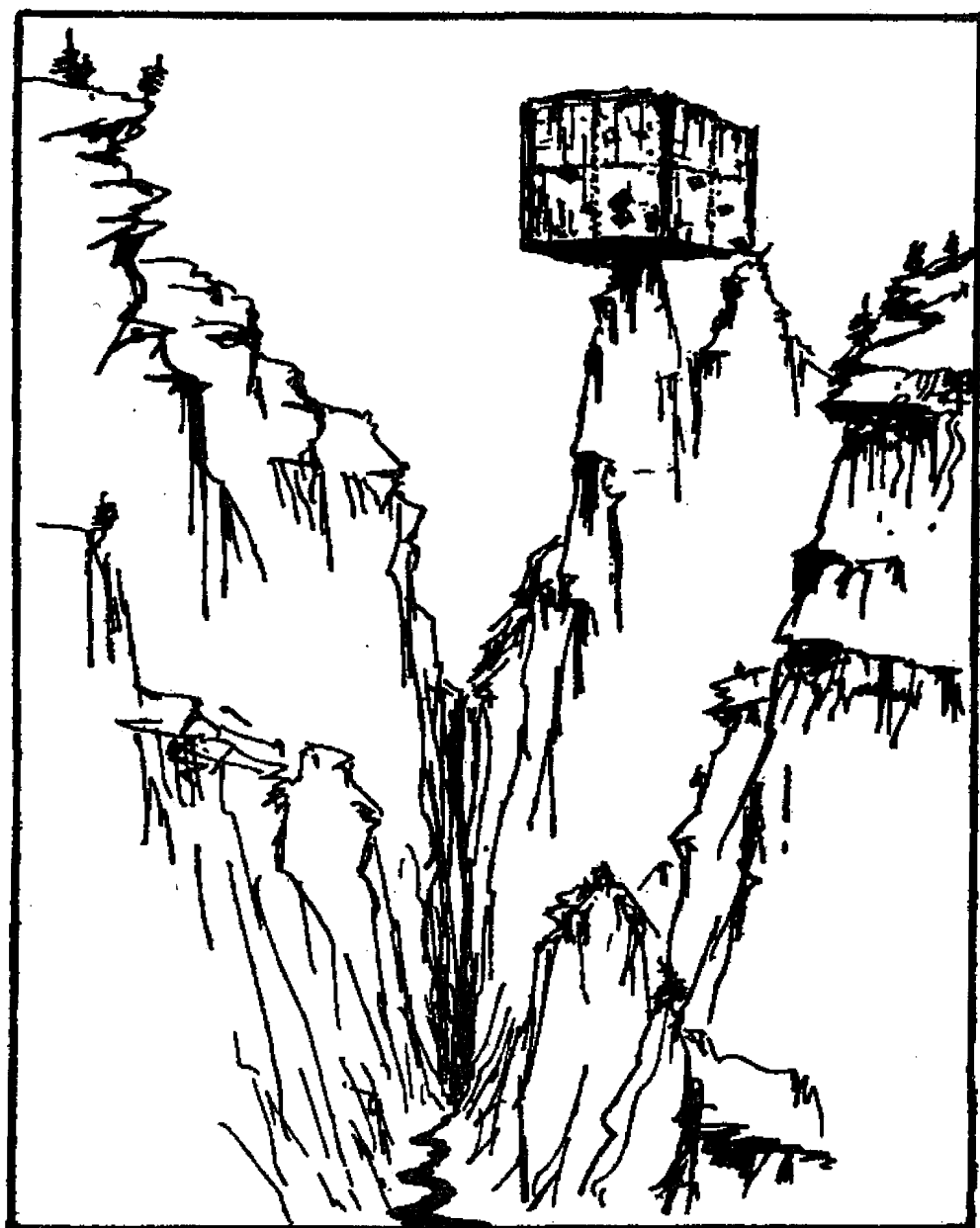
我们只不过是一小撮脆弱而没有什么防范能力的哺乳动物。从人类诞生那天起,我们便被大群的生物团团包围,它们天生有比我们更强壮的生理条件。

当我们笨拙地用两腿,而不像厚皮动物那样借助树干行走时,是这些陆地和水域的动物而不是我们主宰着世界。而现在,它们中的绝大多数在自然历史博物馆中,或是被人类圈养,大部分则回到丛林,不再称霸世界。

人类凭借自己理性的头脑成为世界的统治者,而人类中理性和独立思考能力更强的一小部分人成为人类的统治者。

地球被具有不同智力和思考能力的人类划分,人类借助自己发达的大脑为自己夺取财富,但是底线是不能超越自然的法则,她要求我们研究并顺从她的命令。过犹不及。

人类对于“创造大法则”,即同类之间应该和平友爱的公然违背会使人类陷入灭绝的困地。其他的物种正在高度警惕,毕竟被它们统治总是比



装在盒子里的人类

充斥着战舰和武器的世界有更多优点。

本书希望能给读者以启示，指出问题所在。我们都有责任维护我们的世界的安宁。

*I*T sounds incredible, but nevertheless it is true. If everybody in this world of ours were six feet tall and a foot and a half wide and a foot thick (and that is making people a little bigger than they usually are), then the whole of the human race (and according to the latest available statistics there are now nearly 2,000,000,000 descendants of the original Homo Sapiens and his wife) could be packed into a box measuring half a mile in each direction. That, as I just said, sounds incredible, but if you don't believe me, figure it out for yourself and you will find it to be correct.

If we transported that box to the Grand Canyon of Arizona and balanced it neatly on the low stone wall that keeps people from breaking their necks when stunned by the incredible beauty of that silent witness of the forces of Eternity, and then called little Noodle, the dachshund, and told him (the tiny beast is very intelligent and loves to oblige) to give the unwieldy contraption a slight push with his soft brown nose, there would be a moment of crunching and ripping as the wooden planks loosened stones and shrubs and trees on their downward path, and then a low and even softer bumpity-bumpity-bump and a sudden splash when the outer edges struck the banks of the Colorado River.

Then silence and oblivion!

The astronomers on distant and nearby planets would have noticed nothing out of the ordinary.

A century from now, a little mound, densely covered with vegetable matter, would perhaps indicate where humanity lay buried.

And that would be all.

I can well imagine that some of my readers will not quite like this story and will feel rather uncomfortable when they see their own proud' race reduced to such proportions of sublime insignificance.